

Tips On How To Work With Your Child At Home

What Can You Do To Avoid TV And Still Get Necessary Things Done? How Can You Involve Your Child In Your Life And Daily Activities?

Practical, physical things you can have:

- small apron, low hook
- low work space
- small utensils – child may have own utensils and a low cupboard or drawer to keep things in
- everything should have its own, logical space – bathroom things in the bathroom, kitchen things in the kitchen.
- keep things where they belong as much as possible, try to involve the child in replacing the items
- Special, temporary helps, i.e. a placemat with the plate, fork, spoon and glass drawn on it.

Time:

- instead of rushing through things like you setting the table and then sitting in front of the TV with your child, plan an extra 20-30 minutes to set the table together
- If time is shorter one day than the next, try nevertheless to have a real job ready for the child and please involve your partner. You cook, they set the table.

Schedule

- Figure out in advance (while the child is at school or on your lunch hour) what you can do with the child, the order you will do it in and when you will do it. This will calm you and provide the necessary patience.
- Give realistic choices you can live with, “Do you want to carry the fork (singular) or the spoon? I will carry the knife.”

Trust

- Trust your child, plan well and make time and give a good example (plates held with 2 hands), then don't keep interrupting the child. Observe and you may be surprised at how carefully they do things.

Example

- Move carefully and deliberately so the child can see what you are doing and can copy you.
- Try to repeat actions, put one fork at a time and position it carefully, then the next fork, etc.
- Say in simple but proper words what you are doing the first few times. “I am putting the fork here.” Practice if you have to – pushing in a chair for example.
- Always do things the same way, even if you think the child isn't watching, you never know.

Commentary

- Speak to your child in a clear, polite way. If your partner sets the table you don't say "What a good spouse you are, you make me so proud." But "Thank you, I like it when you help me." This is how you should talk to the child.

Remember

- Everything is temporary, time invested now will save time later. Learning when the desire is strong will speed up the learning.

Ideas for Tasks:**Preparing Food**

- measuring pasta or rice
- washing vegetables - little water, special brush
- stirring cold things like yogurt or mixing salad
- spreading with a butter knife
- remove seeds from tomatoes with fingers
- grating (cheese, apples)
- cutting (bananas, cheese, cucumber)
- beating eggs and batter (pancakes)

Before eating

Setting the table:

- Plates
- Silverware
- Glasses
- Napkins
- serving utensils
- small pitcher for child

After eating

- taking plates, glasses, etc. to kitchen (little tray or basket)
- wiping placemats or table
- pushing in the chairs
- washing dishes
- drying dishes
- putting away dishes

Living Room

- straightening couch cushions
- watering plants (small watering can, little water)
- taking used glasses to kitchen
- cleaning up toys
- sweeping and/or mopping
- dusting

Bathroom

- getting own clean underpants (from special shelf)
- wiping potty clean (you prepare cloth)
- putting wet underwear in laundry basket or soaking bucket
- washing hands
- getting and opening diaper
- taking and replacing toothbrush
- wiping own 'drips' – toilet paper in toilet
- clean outside of toilet (under supervision)
- mopping floor (you squeeze the mop)
- taps on and off (IF you do this be sure the temperature is safe and the pressure low, otherwise it's "your" work)

Bedroom

- pulling sheets and blanket straight
- hanging clothes
- dirty clothes in laundry basket
- putting away shoes
- putting toys on shelf
- opening and closing curtains
- prepare own glass of water
- in the morning they can choose their clothes (you get 2 outfits ready the night before)

Peeling and Cutting a Banana

Example to work with a child at home.

Description:

- Aprons
- A tray with:
 - Banana
 - Scraps bowl
 - Cutting board
 - Butter knife
 - Plate
- Sharp knife for adult

Procedure:

- Wash hands and put on aprons
- Go to the (kitchen) work area and put the tray on the low, food working area
- Show the child the banana, you can smell it and feel it, repeat the word (with a young child the noun only).
- Tell the child, "We are going to peel the banana."
- Start the process by breaking (or cutting) the top off the banana. Peel one strip down and put it into the scraps bowl.
- Ask the child if he would like to help peel the banana. Help him start a strip.
- Let him peel the banana completely, help him by holding it and starting strips if necessary. Use words like "banana peel", say "We have peeled the banana."
- Put the cutting board on the working area and lay the banana on the cutting board.
- Show the child how to cut off a piece of the banana using the butter knife.
- Lay the knife down and put the piece onto the plate. Repeat.
- Let the child take a turn and continue if he wants to.
- Put the plate of banana pieces safely away until time to eat them.
- Take the dirty utensils to the sink.
- Throw the banana peel away in the trash.
- Wash hands again, they will be sticky.
- Put the aprons away.

Safety in the Home

General Safety

- ♦ Cover electrical outlets, either with the special plugs commercially available or by moving furniture in front of the outlet.
- ♦ Use safety nets or gates to secure staircases.
- ♦ Secure cupboards, shelves, bookcases, etc. to the wall so they cannot tip over and fall.
- ♦ Get down on your hands and knees and check for safety hazards.
- ♦ Check the carpets and floors for pins, coins or any small objects that could be swallowed or cause injury.
- ♦ Have poison information handy and the telephone number of Poison Information. Have ipecac syrup for inducing vomiting IF the poison control center advises it.
- ♦ Use corner and edge bumpers on furniture.
- ♦ Have window guards.
- ♦ Use safety netting for balconies and decks.
- ♦ Know your plants, which are safe for children and get rid of those that are not.

Child's Room

- ♦ The changing table should have a protective ridge so a small child cannot easily roll off. In any case NEVER leave the child alone on the table.
- ♦ If you have any electrical appliances in the child's room, for instance a humidifier, have it well secured and high enough to be out of reach of the child.

Toys

- ♦ Be sure the toys have no small parts.
- ♦ They should be washable.
- ♦ Toys must be painted with non-toxic paint.
- ♦ Toys must not have sharp edges.
- ♦ They must not break into sharp pieces.

Kitchen Safety

- ♦ As in the living room, make sure electrical cords are secured so the child cannot pull them and pull the appliance down on top of himself.
- ♦ Gas burners should have a protector around them. If possible they can be equipped with an automatic shut off when the pan is lifted off.
- ♦ Cook on the back burners, no matter which burner a pan is on, turn the handles to the back of the stove, out of reach.

- ♦ If the oven is low, keep the child out of the kitchen when it's being used, the door can get very hot.
- ♦ Keep hot food and beverages away from table and counter edges.
- ♦ With the exception of the cabinet or drawer prepared for the child, kitchen cupboards and drawers should have child locks on them.
- ♦ Tablecloths and placemats must be avoided if the child can pull them down, they might have something on top of them that could be dangerous to the child.
- ♦ Keep cleaning fluids, disinfectants, insecticides, poisons and matches locked away from children.
- ♦ Knives should be kept in a safe place and not left where a child can reach them.

Bathroom Safety

- ♦ Keep electrical appliances, hair dryers, electric razors, etc. safely in the bedroom or locked away along with scissors and manual razors.
- ♦ Be sure medicine is in child-resistant packaging and lock it away, high, out of reach.
- ♦ Put a lock on the toilet to prevent drowning.
- ♦ Use an anti-slip rug in the bathroom, it is easy to slip with wet feet.
- ♦ Adjust the hot water so it is warm rather than hot.
- ♦ Do not EVER leave the child alone in the bathtub. Take the phone with you or ignore phone calls, etc. when the child is bathing.
- ♦ Keep the water level in the tub low enough so the child does not float, this makes them unstable.

Living Room

- ♦ Make sure electric cords, from lamps, TV, stereo, etc. are secured so that the child cannot pull the appliance down on top of himself.

Swimming Pool

- ♦ Must be fenced

Car

- ♦ Get a good, safe car seat and secure it properly.

Bicycle

- ♦ Get a safe bicycle seat with foot rests.
- ♦ Make sure the child wears a helmet.